1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

farm. If Kachella Abba were to leave Magumeri, Monadu feels he would move with him. This would not impair his relationship to the salt supplier since that man lives in Maiduguri where he would still have to go to obtain wholesale salt. He says Kachella Abba is his "father" and he would and must serve him and give him respect even though the two men are nearly the same age.

BUKAR, THE "TADA NJIMA" Another example of retailing that shows how it is often imbedded into a more general relationship is that of Bukar. Bukar can be seen three or four days a week walking about the village of Magumeri with a tin of cellophane-wrapped candies. One of the village's household heads goes in and out of the city regularly on messages for the native administration. When in the city he buys a tin or two of candy and brings these back to Magumeri. The boy, Bukar, is about twenty years old; he is not related by descent or marriage to the senior man but lives in his compound and is fed and clothed by the household head. When the senior rides horseback in ceremonies the boy carries his spear and walks behind the horse; he gathers grass for the horse, runs messages for the household head, carries water for the household, and works on the household farm-plots. Receipts from the candy sale are given to the household head who then gives Bukar a small amount for himself. Here the retailing of candy is only one aspect of the relationship between Bukar and his household head. He refers to his superior, the household head, as *abba njima* or father of the house, and says of him, "He is just like my father."

AJIMI, THE KOLA NUT SELLER Next we see a wholesaler who sells directly to retailers in an ancient trade that has always allowed for middlemen by the score because of the vast distances over which it is carried out. Ajimi is a young man of twenty-five or twenty-six who lives with his brothers in a small hamlet just outside Magumeri. For the six to nine months a year when farming is slack, and intermittently while he is farming, Ajimi sells kola nuts to local retailers. Ajimi gets the money from his father's older brother in the city and then buys a *kwando,* a large rope wrapped package of nuts. A kwando costs about sixty to seventy dollars and contains roughly 7000 to 8000 nuts. He buys the nuts from traders in the city who ship them into Maiduguri from other parts of Nigeria and West Africa.

Ajimi visits three or four of these traders regularly about twice a month in the dry season. He always goes to all of them, inspects their goods, talks prices, and then decides where to place his order. He does this for two reasons. First there is always some variety in price and quality and he must try to get the best he can of both. Secondly, by going to these same suppliers, among dozens of possible ones, he feels he can build up their confidence in him by selling his stuff well and steadily. Indeed, several of the suppliers have on occasion given him an extra kwando on credit and he kept the profits for himself.

Generally Ajimi brings the nuts back in time for Magumeri Sunday market and attends the Thursday and Monday markets as well at nearby towns. He can sell a kwando to retailers in about two weeks and make a profit of about thirty dollars, half of which he gives to his father's older brother who supplied the original money. Thus he makes about fifteen dollars for two weeks of wholesaling—if he is lucky and sagacious in his relations to retailers. Retailers can go to several suppliers like Ajimi. They decide on the basis of quality of the nuts, on the price, and whether they can obtain credit when they need it. The most flexible and negotiable of these is credit, and Ajimi has his most difficult time trying to compete on this

level and still make a profit. He will not give credit to strangers, but must have done business with the man successfully or have some previous knowledge of him, his family, his agnates, or any one else who would be responsible for him if he were taken into court for a bad debt. Nevertheless, with each retailer taking about two to four dollars worth of nuts it takes only a few bad debts to whittle away his fifteen dollar profit into a loss, and he has had a number of these on which it took several later trips to recoup his losses. Ajimi, however, is very philosophical and entertains his friends for hours telling stories about his bad debts to point up the moral that a kola nut seller's life is not a happy one.

AJIMI'S UNCLE Finally let us look at Ajimi's uncle, his father's older brother who lives in the city and runs, because of his access to liquid capital, a relatively large trading organization along traditional lines.

Ajimi's uncle is a man of fifty-five years who has three wives and a concubine as well as a son and a younger brother's son living in his large compound in Maiduguri. He generally has several *tada njima* living in the compound, and in the near vicinity are those of his other married *tada njima* who are part of his organization.

His mode of operation is fairly simple; he gives out money to men like Ajimi to trade with, and then takes one half or more of the profits. Some of these men are connected by kinship to the uncle; others, indeed most of them, are not. Those who are not, start out in his compound as low status *tada njima;* they carry water, cut grass for the horses, run messages, and so on. For this they receive their food, shelter, clothing, and a little pocket money. If over a period of one to two years they prove respectable and trustworthy, Ajimi's uncle gives them some money and sends them out to trade, usually with someone more experienced at first, then on their own. The following list indicates both the range and number of his enterprises:

1. Two men buy millet in Geidam for sale in Maiduguri going to the Geidam market once every week or two.
2. One man sells cloth in Damasac. The cloth is supplied to him by Ajimi's uncle who buys it in larger quantities for sale in several places. This same man is given money to buy onions and ship them to Damasac where they are scarce and high priced.
3. One man buys fish at Abadan on Lake Chad and sells it in Maiduguri.
4. Another man buys natron in Bama (to the southeast of Bornu) for sale in Maiduguri.
5. Several (from one to three) buy cattle in Bornu and sell them in Kano.
6. Several (one to three) buy cattle in Bornu and sell them in Makurdi.
7. One man purchases butter in Damaturu (Fulani country) and sells it in Maiduguri.
8. One (Ajimi) sells kola nuts in Magumeri and used to buy ground-nuts for sale in the capital.

The organization involves anywhere from eleven to sixteen men (the number varies over time) and their families, and probably involves a turnover of about $1200 to $1500 per month with a maximum profit margin of anywhere from thirty to forty percent on the investment. By Bornu standards Ajimi's uncle is a wealthy

433 economic situation in Bornu is determined to a large extent by
439 changes in the world market price of export items which are now
433 a vital part of the local economy. The Kanuri are an agricul-
241 tural people whose staple crop is millet. Along with millet,
the main crop is peanuts, grown for sale and ultimate export.
243 Every farmer grows millet for his family. Should he have a
436 surplus he sells it in the local markets. Most farmers also
244 raise peanuts as well. The nuts are bought by local trading
442 companies, acting as agents for the government controlled
655 Groundnut Marketing Board which buys the entire crop and
439 sells it on the world market. Cow hides and sheep and goat
433 skins are also brought by the trading companies for export,
237 and represent an important part of the total economy. The West
439 African Pound is the basic currency unit and the shilling is
436 the unit of trade in the remotest sections of the province.
Maria Theresa dollars are still in evidence but are rarely used
as currency.

439 A network of European trading companies exists throughout
442 Northern Nigeria. Almost all of them have canteens run by
473 European agents scattered in larger towns throughout the region.
The largest of these is the United Africa Company, a subsidiary
of Unilever. Others, John Holt and Co., Société Commerciale du
Oest Afrique, Compagnie Française du Afrique Occidental, and A.
G. Leventis and Co., are multi-million-dollar companies with
452 head offices in England or on the Continent. They all buy pea-
nuts, and hides and skins, and they buy through a complex system

439 of advancing credit to middlemen who do the actual buying of the
413 nuts and hides. The entire peanut crop of an area is bought al-
442 most before it is planted. Textiles, manufactured in Japan or
[852] India, are the main items imported into the region and bought by the Kanuri. Additional items imported in quantity are enamelware bowls and dishes, salt, sugar, perfume, and numerous small items of Western manufacture. For those who can afford them, the trading companies sell battery-powered radios, sewing machines, bicycles, etc.

438 Trade, both external and internal, is a vital part of
439 Kanuri economy. Traders are numerous and often very wealthy.
452 Money is lent at interest, though this is forbidden by the Koran.
437 Goods are advanced on credit by European traders, and by Kanuri
441 traders as well. A Kanuri trader who has credit with a trading
[983] company will take 500 pounds' worth of cotton cloth, promising
[943] to pay off the amount in a month. He distributes the goods to ten men who work for him, or, more properly, are attached to him. They each take 50 pounds' worth of cloth to small markets in the bush. There they try to sell the goods directly or they may give the goods on credit to a local merchant who sells them. Slowly the cash returns to the original middleman, and ultimately to the original trading company, which then permits the middleman to take another batch of goods on credit. Conversely, a trading company may advance 500 pounds in cash to a middleman who promises to bring, in one month's time, 500 pounds' worth of peanuts. He distributes the cash to his people who then

243 221 ber is expected to last them for an entire year, and the months of April, May and June are generally the hungry months, when the millet supplies begin to diminish.

244 243 312 Additional crops of some importance are varieties of beans, okra, rice, melons, squash, tomatoes, cucumbers and onions. These are frequently grown as garden crops, near places where there is a permanent water supply. They can then be watered by hand, or through the use of shadoofs to raise water from rivers to the higher banks.

244 Groundnuts are the primary cash crop of Northern Nigeria, and the Kanuri plant large quantities. Almost all Kanuri families, even those in the larger towns plant a crop of millet; in the villages, almost all plant a second crop of groundnuts as well. These are bought by agents of the larger trading companies for cash, and eventually are sold to the Nigerian Groundnut Marketing Board through which they are released onto the world market. Millet is the basic subsistence crop of the Kanuri, while groundnuts are the primary source of cash for the Kanuri villager.

433 233 The Kanuri do not rely exclusively on agriculture. They keep sheep and goats in their villages, which young boys take out beyond the fields to graze in the mornings, returning in the evening. Cows are kept, and fed by the same means, but these are few in numbers. Certain Kanuri sub-groups, the Kwoyam and the Buduwai, depend largely on cattle which they keep in

433 233 563

433 great numbers. Buduwai farm and keep large herds of sheep,
233 goats and cows in the brush countryside surrounding their vil-
563 lages. The Kwoyam are a nomadic herding people who keep only
563 cows. Culturally they are very close to the Kanuri; their
233 economy, however, is quite different. They live in a close
relationship with the settled agricultural Kanuri whom they
[437] otherwise resemble greatly. Pastoral Fulani and Shuwa Arabs,
on the other hand, have very little in common with the kanuri
agriculturalists, yet, like the Kwoyam, they live in symbiotic
interdependence with the agricultural Kanuri. The Fulani of
Bornu are semi-nomadic pastoralists who are the most north-
easterly extension of far-flung Fulani culture. The Shuwa
are an Arabic speaking people related to other such peoples
extending eastward to the Sudan. Fulani and Shuwa keep dif-
ferent breeds of cattle and subsist almost entirely on milk
[438] and milk products. They have very similar relations to the
sedentary Kanuri with whom they exchange dairy products for
439 grain and for the goods produced by Kanuri craftsmen. Be-
237 cause of the large numbers of cattle, sheep, and goats found
433 in Bornu Province, hides, sheep skins and goat skins are an
[442] important product for export. These are sold for cash to
Kanuri middlemen and are exported by the trading companies.
[434] They are another important source of revenue for the Kanuri.
ooo Lastly gum arabic, which is the base from which gum drops

[GEIDAM]

seller.

441 438 439 443 442 Table V lists the major types of tradesmen in Geidam, according to the type of goods in which they specialize. Retailers and wholesalers have been grouped together, and as can be seen from the table, though most are involved in selling in the market-place, five of the types of tradesmen are not engaged in selling in the market at all. The brokers who sell cows, horses, sheep, and goats are all dilelma. Minor brokers who deal in cattle, or in sheep and goats, work in the market-place. [554] Wealthier and more important dilelma dealing in the same goods are fatoma, and do not do business in the market at all. Rather, their trade centers around their houses. All the fatoma in Geidam dealing in cattle, and almost all fatoma are involved in the cattle trade, are clustered around the house of Lowan Kolo Kolo, who was a fatoma in cattle himself before he became [556] a Lowan. There are about ten such fatoma, all wealthy men, in Geidam. A smaller number of dilelma dealing in sheep and goats, three in all, own houses close to one another in another section of town; another group of four or five dilelma in horses are clustered in their own neighborhood. Good horses are rarely sold in the open market, so that dilelma in horses arrange their sales on an individual basis, away from the market-place. The hide sellers are the only other group of tradesmen who are localized within a single neighborhood.

441 According to Table V, the various tradesmen tend to be organized under a head man, whose functions are identical to

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• [MH2]

Table V

Major Types of Tradesmen in Geidam

	organized with head	not organized	live localized	live dispersed	sells in market	sells outside
Brokers:						
sell cows	*		*		*	*
sheep/goats	*		*		*	*
horses	*		*			*
Canteen operators		*		*		*
Gown sellers	*			*	*	*
Grain sellers	*			*	*	*
Hide sellers	*		*		*	*
Kola nut sellers:						
wholesalers,	*			*		*
retailers	*			*	*	*
Money-lenders		*		*		*
Peanut sellers		*		*		*
Sundry sellers:						
traditional	*			*	*	
Western goods		*		*	*	
Tobacco-flower sellers	*			*	*	

[BEIDAM]

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[434] but that in Gwonyiri, about three-quarters of a mile to the east of Magumeri village, there were at least a dozen "rich" men. When asked why they were rich he answered that they had very large farms (about fifteen to twenty acres) and made much money from their cash crops. [442] One was a wholesale kola nut dealer and sold many (four to six) "packages" [465] of nuts (one package equals five to eight thousand nuts) per month. It was illuminating in this conversation, in which the young man was asked, "What is a rich man?" and, "Who are rich men?", that he had not mentioned the District Head of Magumeri who earns officially seven hundred pounds per annum, or any of the well-known rich traders of Bornu who live in Maiduguri. When asked whether the rich peasants of Gwonyiri were wealthier than the District Head or a rich trader in the city he said "ata a'l gadigedi" (that is something different) because "sandi kam gedi" (they are different people). The District Head is an aristocrat, a man of power, and the rich trader is a kam birni (a city man) but "arma andi tala" (we are peasants). That is to say, the informant's birth and socialization into the rural peasant sector of Kanuri society made his range of judgments along the dimensions of status different from that of a chief or a rich trader. Like other informants, his concept of the status dimension was divided into "my" range, or "our" range, and "their" range. Although he knew that the range of statuses along any dimension went beyond "our range", he perceived people outside this to be "different" and he used the expression "different people" to describe them. Yet he certainly recognized that they were of the same ethnic group as himself. When he was first asked about rich people he used

443 With one
[442] exception,(1) locally produced items such as medical services, pottery,
[438] meat, and so on, do not have a wholesale organization. Goods not produced locally involve some supra-local organization. This is true of things like salt, textiles, kola-nuts and manufactured goods. As a general rule, locally produced goods and services are retailed by their producers or their close relatives. Thus a lady making pots might send a daughter to market to sell; but a pottery woman was never observed selling her wares to a middleman who would in turn retail them. The data given above on Ka'anami, the calabash maker, is another example of this general rule.

438 On the other hand, retailers of goods not produced locally
442 must have some operating social relationships with a wholesale source of
443 supply. This wholesale supply relation may vary from a specifically
571 economic one to a much more diffuse superior/subordinate relationship. The primary modes of behavioral interaction for all these relationships are bərzum (discipline-respect) and aman (trust).(2) Some examples may help to illustrate this point.

(a) Momadu Mandama (Momadu, the salt seller)

438 Momadu, a man of about fifty-five to sixty years of age,
442 has lived in Magumeri for seven or eight years. He comes originally
443 from Hadejia (to the west of Bornu) where he began selling salt for a

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[824] (1) Gworongo, the plant used by women for staining their teeth is pro-
[302] duced locally, but not in enough quantity in any one town to meet demand. Thus a few middlemen per market cycle collect the plants from producers and distribute them throughout the area covered by their own market cycles. They sell to both consumers and retailers.

(2) See above, pp. 57-68.

438 mai gida (1) who was an Arab trader when he was still a small boy. The
442 Arab would give him several bags of salt (about 101bs. per bag) on
443 credit and he would sell this material, winning about 1/- per bag for
himself. After all the goods were sold, he paid the Arab for them.
In his later teens or early twenties, he came to Maiduguri where he had
[578] some agnatic relatives. They backed him for a while but he ended this
relationship because of quarrels over the division of the profits.

When he first came to Magumeri, the wife of the District Head of the day became his mai gida (i.e. his supplier of salt). Her servants went to Maiduguri and picked up salt from wholesalers. She then distributed small lots in bags to retailers. When she left several years ago, he obtained another mai gida in Maiduguri.

It is from this mai gida that Momadu receives his salt at the present time. A tada njima (son of the house, subordinate follower) of the Maiduguri trader brings five bags of salt to Magumeri on Sundays (market day) and Momadu sells them during the week at approximate-
571 ly 2/6d profit per bag. Momadu feels no strong responsibility in this relation for, as he says, he has an aba njima (father of the house, superior, protector) or superior/subordinate relationship with Kachella Abba, the dyer and cloth seller in Magumeri. He eats at Kachella Abba's house, borrows money from him without interest, runs messages for him and helps Kachella Abba on his farm. If Kachella Abba ever moves away from Magumeri, Momadu feels that he would go with him. The salt seller claims that he has no father now and Kachella Abba is really his father

[192] (1) Mai gida is Hausa for head of the compound. In Kanuri it is used
[571] to mean the same thing, or it can also mean the person from whom ego obtains his goods. It implies superior/subordinate relationship, and (in Kanuri) can also imply a wholesale source of supply, i.e. a person who is ego's wholesaler.

571 (even though the two men are almost the same age).

(b) Bukar, tada njima of Mala Yaro (Bukar, the "son of the house" of Mala Yaro.

438 442 443 571 Bukar can be seen three or four days a week walking about town in Maguneri, with a tin of cellophane wrapped candies. Mala Yaro, one of the N. A. messengers who goes in and out to the city regularly gives him a tin about once a week, which the boy sells in town. Mala Yaro buys the tin from a "Kanti" (canteen or shop) run by a Kanuri in Maiduguri. The boy who is not related by kinship or marriage to his superior also helps Mala Yaro in the compound, carries his spear when the latter rides in ceremonial displays, gathers grass for the horse, carries water for the household (the women are in seclusion) and in return receives his food, clothing, shelter and spending money from his superior. Profits from the retailing of candy accrue to the senior who gives Bukar a small commission for his selling services. Here the retail economic relationship is only one small aspect of the superior/subordinate barcum relationship between the seller and his wholesale supplier, and therefore both meanings of the word apply to the one situation.

(c) Ajimi Gworoma (Ajima the kola-nut seller)

438 442 For the six to eight months a year when he is not tending his farm plots and intermittently during the farming season, Ajimi sells to bakama, retailers of small quantities of kola nuts. His Fa-Ol-Bro is Alkali Bukar, the ex-Alkali (judge) of Geidam District.(1) As of July, 1956, Alkali Bukar had given Ajimi £20.0.0 in cash on eight separate occasions since the end of the 1955 harvests. With this money Ajimi purchased kola-nuts from big traders, who had trucked the nuts into Maiduguri from Jos, Kano and other parts of Nigeria.

[439] [554]

(1) Having once received the title of Alkali, or any title, the recipient maintains it evey after he has become inactive in the role.

438 guri from Jos, Kano and other parts of Nigeria.
442

Ajimi regularly obtains his nuts from four of these traders, all of whom he visits, and all of whose goods he inspects and prices before he decides where to place his order. He strongly asserts that his primary criterion in making the decision as to where to buy is the quality of the nuts. Two of the suppliers are Kanuri, one of whom owns his own lorries; the other two are Hausa. Ajimi has gone to other suppliers in the past but could not, at the time of this study, remember their names. By going to the same supplier over and over again with his uncle's money, he builds up confidence, and has on several occasions obtained an extra kwando on credit from one of the Kanuri suppliers, the profits ofwhich he kept entirely for himself.

435 Although there is some variation in price, it generally
438 occurs at the retail level, while for bulk shipments cash prices re-
442 main fairly constant, and it is quantity which varies with supply, quality and demand. Thus £20.0.0 is generally the price for a kwando of kola-nuts (a large rafia rope-bound package). A kwando contains seven thousand to eight thousand nuts depending upon their size, quality and the state of the market at any particular time. After returning to Magumeri, Ajimi generally gets back about £32.0.0 per kwando and returns the money, plus half the profits (i.e. £6.0.0) to Alkali Bukar. This buying and selling procedure takes him between thirteen to seventeen days or roughly two weekly market cycles.

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438 He wholesales his nuts in the Magumeri area and regularly
442 attends the Magumeri (Sunday), Gamiram (Thursday),(1) and Ardoram (Monday)
[366] markets.

(1) He avoids the more usual Thursday market at Ngubura and attends the Gajiram market because it has no motor road, and he finds less competition and a smaller number of kola-nut wholesalers there than at Ngubura.

442 572 markets. The nuts are sold to any kola-nut retailer (bakama) who wishes to buy them, but Ajimi named thirty-five of these whom he considered to be "friends" and more regular customers than others. At the same time they buy from other and bigger wholesalers.(1) 442 452 572 Retailers also use standards of quality as well as price in their buying discriminations, but are interested even more in obtaining a credit relationship with their supplier. To his thirty-five "regulars", which include four consanguinal kin, Ajimi does extend credit if requested and this is fairly often. He does not give credit to a stranger, a man he does not consider a "friend", i.e. with whom he has had little contact. This credit can mount up and if several debtors leave for other places in Bornu, Ajimi can conclude his selling trip with a loss rather than a gain. This happened to him in July, 1955, when he reportedly lost £12.0.0 on one kwando of kola-nuts. The people who owed him money all seemed to be moving around the country at the time and he was left with a lot of bad debts from retailers who had moved off to other parts of Bornu.

442 571 When asked specifically, Ajimi replies that Alkali Bukar is his mai gida, but when describing the relationship in his own words he does not use the term. Instead, he repeatedly refers to himself as the tada of the Alkali and says that this person is "like his father". [602] That is to say, although the mai gida relationship can be used to describe what happens between Ajimi and his Fa-Ol-Bro, it is more often used when the relationship is not truly consanguinal.

Ajimi is quite prepared to move into a barzum relationship with any of the four big traders from whom he buys if this could be arranged profitably between them. Indeed, Ajimi is very much on the look-

(1) Ajimi only sells one kwando per trading trip, while others distribute anywhere from two to six.

442 571 out for some new supplier relations since he has recently lost money for Alkali Bukar (1) and the latter, kinship notwithstanding, has been reluctant to continue his financing. Without being asked, Ajimi referred to the possibility of relationships in the future with non-kin backers to meet his need for a mai gida.

(d) Alkali Bukar

441 452 [423] [648] Alkali Bukar who up until summer of 1957, had been financing Ajimi, was at one time the Alkali of Kaguneri and still owns a choice farm plot there which his son plants and harvests for him with the aid of labourers. When he was dismissed from his judicial post several years ago by the British he went into trade using his house in Maiduguri as his headquarters.

441 452 571 He gives out money to people like Ajimi to trade with and takes a share of the profits. Some of these subordinates are kin relations, most are not. Those who are not consanguineal kin start out in his household as tada njima where they carry water, cut grass for the for the horses, run messages and so on. For this they receive their food, shelter, clothing and a little spending money. If over a period of one to two years they prove trustworthy the Alkali gives them some money for trade. During 1956-57 he engaged in the following ventures in Bornu: 441 438

(1) Several (two or three) "boys" bought millet in Geidam for sale in Maiduguri.

(2) One "boy" sold cloth (obtained by the Alkali) in Damasac, as well as onions, which the subordinate obtained himself with the Alkali's money.

[684] (1) Ajimi has a penchant for adultery and has had to pay several large fines recently, the money for which he obtained from his trading receipts.

452 But credit per se plays a large part in the total economy. Thus the
441 butchers all remarked that they would buy cows during the wet season, preferably for cash. If this was not possible, they had arrangements with nomad cattle herders to take a cow on credit for a higher price, and then pay the herder after the meat had been sold. As we have seen, Ajimi's kola-nut business is run on credit. Many of the articles brought into the local market such as small manufactured goods, salt, sugar, cloth, and a host of other items are obtained on credit and payment made
452 after the sale. It is because this entire complex of trading relations
441 depends so much on credit that traditional behaviour norms of hàrzun
571 and aman are applied to the economic organization. These institutionalized patterns of discipline and trust create an avenue for socially predictable behaviour without which credit relations would be impossible.

442 Credit also plays a part in the introduction of cash into
[452] the Bornu economy from the European sources of capital. The key role
[436] in this transmission is that of the sàkelma (scale man) who buys the cash crop in the bush. An insight into this role may be seen in some of the interview material from Malam Mina, a wholesale salt trader, who also buys groundnuts over the scale at Magumeri during the harvest season. During November, Malam Mina, along with fifteen to twenty-five others, comes to Magumeri from the city. He sets up a grass mat shelter at the "station", near the motor road, about two hundred yards west of
[405] the town proper. The hallmark of this little colony is the scale which sits out in front of each shelter with bags of decorticated groundnuts
[443] being prepared for shipment into the city. Each shelter also has a generous supply of textiles for sale so that peasants may purchase their
[369] new cloth on the spot when cashing in the crop. The buyers also bring their city culture with them and during their short stay, morris chairs,

442 369 camp stools, battery radios, talk of politics and city life enliven the rural scene.

442 443 452 Malam Mina buys for his mai gida, Alhaji Ali, a Kanuri trader in Maiduguri who has a retail store or "canteen" as it is called locally. The mai gida gives Malam Mina cigarettes, flashlight batteries, perfumes , etc., for the latter's teber (table) or booth which a younger [405] brother runs for him in Maiduguri. Alhaji Ali obtains about ten scales from a Levantine trader during the harvest season and gives them out to his tada (boys) who go to the bush and buy the cash crop. Malam Mina receives a straight commission of 12/- per ton of decorticated nuts and as much profit as he can on the import items (mostly textiles) which are also obtained on credit from his mai gida. He remarked how he had only been with Alhaji Ali this one year, last year having bought for another man who had a direct link to a European company. However, last year he found that his buying price was £2.0.0 less per ton than other [434] scale men, and his commission fell. In 1955 his commission (from receipt slips) was about £60.0.0 but he hoped to get around £75.0.0 or £80.0.0 in 1956-57.

442 435 [455] Malam Mina may, if it is possible, depress the price below the buying price given to him. This causes no undue concern on the part of his mai gida in the city as long as his tonnage does not decline. He also buys futures at 20/- to 25/- per bag, whenever he can, but would not estimate how much of this he does.

441 571 [212] It is interesting to note that Malam Mina has been taken on by his new mai gida and given a trading role without the more usual period of general service and subordination, as in the case of the "boys" of Alkali Bukar. Here we have another example of specialization. Malam Mina is an experienced scale man. He can read and record figures and sign his name.